



Date: 22nd & 29th June 2025

Theme: Transformation

Bible Readings: Luke 8:26-39

and Galatians 3:23-29

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PREPARATION FOR GROUP LEADERS

As we approach the summer holidays, please ensure your group knows when you will be meeting in July and August. Please make yourself familiar with all the material and Bible passages. Also, hold in prayer each member of the group, including yourself as you prepare and lead this session.

PREPARATION FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS (before the session)

The Gospel passage for this session is placed straight after Jesus has calmed a storm ([Luke 8:22-25](#)). His disciples felt they were in great danger, but Jesus slept, finding a special sense of peace. When Jesus awoke, he spoke to the wind and the waves and the storm died down. When they arrived at the shore of Lake Galilee, there was different kind of storm awaiting them...

As you are preparing at home, **first seek God's peace**. If you have had a stormy day, find a place where you can be still. Use your own words (or the prayer below) asking for God's peace and calm.

Next, **slowly read the passage, Luke 8:26-39**, stopping to imagine the different scenes, people, and moods. Try to put yourself in the picture, maybe as a bystander, a disciple, or even the man healed by Jesus in the story. **Some questions to ponder:**

What might you be thinking if you were a disciple about to get off the boat?

Have you witnessed someone making a spectacle of themselves in a public place? How did you feel?

How did you react to the person at the centre of the scene in the Gospel reading?

How might you respond to the man if you were a local resident (before or after the healing)?

STARTING THE SESSION: A PRAYER

Lord, still us.

(Adapted from a prayer by Donald Coggan.)

Let our minds be inquiring, searching.

Let our hearts be open to you and to each other.

Save us from mental rust. Deliver us from spiritual decay.

Keep us alive and alert in your Spirit. Teach us as we read your Word.

Inspire us to learn more about the life Jesus offers. In His name. **Amen.**

FINDING OUR ROOTS

The Gospel story tells us about a man who was 'demon-possessed'. This may be a difficult subject for some. Please be sensitive to one another. **In groups of 3 or 4, please discuss the following:**

What do you understand by the phrase 'demon possession'? Is there a difference between the way Luke and his contemporaries saw it, and the way we might consider this today?

Does it help to see life as a spiritual battlefield?

How seriously do you take the relationship between your mental and physical well-being? Are both also important for our spiritual health?

READING THE SCRIPTURES - with background information

Read together the Bible passage: [Luke 8:26-39](#)

Luke chapter 8 tells us how Jesus, taking a boat across the lake of Galilee, escapes from the crowds with his disciples. Firstly, they encounter a fearful storm which Jesus calms. Next, they come to shore on the eastern part of the lake where the land rises steeply away from the water. Here, the country of the Gadarenes (or Gerasenes) is predominantly Gentile (non-Jewish) territory. They are met by a man driven from his home by evil spirits. He is naked, violent, yelling aggressively, living precariously in a graveyard. He falls down before Jesus who commands the multitude of demons to leave him. Jesus asks the man his name. 'Legion,' he replies (a legion was comprised of 6,000 Roman soldiers). As the demons leave the man, they enter into a herd of pigs who hurtle down the steep bank into the water and drown. The pig farmers (swineherds) rush into town to recount the news. When the townsfolk arrive, the fracas is over. What they see is a man, calm, fully clothed, 'in his right mind' and sitting at the feet of Jesus. They are 'in great fear' and ask Jesus to leave their district. The healed man wants to follow Jesus, but Jesus tells him to go back home and witness there to what God has done for him. *(This story is also told in [Matthew 8:28-34](#) and in [Mark 5:1-20](#). At home, you might like to spot the differences!)*

DIGGING DEEPER

Some questions for you to consider in your group, or you may have questions of your own:

Is there a link between Jesus calming the storm and then dealing with the demon-possessed man?

What qualities did Jesus demonstrate through both events?

Can you think why the man might have adopted the name 'Legion'?

What were the consequences of his violent outbursts – both in terms of the physical affect on himself, and the imposed safeguards (or punishments)? Who in our society suffers similar indignities?

On meeting Jesus, what does 'Legion' do and say? (v.28) How might you explain this strange behaviour? Do you think this tormented approach was important for his healing?

How might we approach Jesus, when we feel broken or in need of his healing touch? Does Jesus mind if we are angry, confused, or fearful?

Why were the people of the region 'seized with great fear'? (v.37) Does the fact that this is a Gentile region have any bearing on their reaction? (And what do you make of the outcome for the pigs?)

What are the signs of Legion's healing and transformation? What transformation can Jesus make in our lives, and what would be the signs?

Why does Jesus send the healed man back home? (v.39) Why might this be a challenge for him? Why can it be a challenge for us as followers today?

The epistle reading linked to this passage is [Galatians 3:23-29](#), written by St. Paul in one of his earliest letters to an emerging church wrestling with the differences between the Jewish law and Christian faith. *Can you find any connections between this and the Gospel passage?*

PRAYING TOGETHER

In a time of sharing and open prayer together, bring to God the needs of your group, community, or church. Mention people or situations on your hearts that need God's healing or transformation.

Pray for the world in time of great turmoil, tumult and strife. Pray for peace for the nations, for wisdom for the world's leaders, and for help, healing and rebuilding for the innocent victims of war.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus Christ, who for love of our souls entered the deep darkness of the cross; we pray that your healing love may surround all who are in the darkness and isolation of mental distress and who find it difficult to pray for themselves.*

Be to them light in their darkness, their refuge and strength in times of fear.

Give special skills and compassionate hearts to all who care for them.

Bless us all with your healing and your peace. Amen.

(A prayer from SPCK, adapted.)